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## **"Covid-19 strengthened our marriage"**

Dominic and Winni from Hong Kong faced Covid-19 together in the hospital and, after a month and a half, managed to get through it.

06/16/2020

"Mr. Lee, it is very likely that you will be diagnosed with Covid-19; we are just waiting for the results of a second test to be sure." The news came as a complete shock. I barely

managed to ask a question to break the long and uncomfortable silence: "What is my chance of survival?" The doctor quickly replied: "Don't think about that, for now you must concentrate on how to beat the virus." So I was officially diagnosed with Covid-19 in March 2020, after a two-week vacation in Canada. The same room that I thought I would only be staying in for a couple of hours became my accommodation for the next 47 days.

## **A Big Surprise**

I have to admit I was pretty scared. Winni and I had just bought our first house in Canada and we were full of projects and dreams. The news of Covid-19 took me by surprise and produced a certain uneasiness inside me. I began to ask myself many questions and to put myself in the worst possible scenario... I called my spiritual director and told him my

situation. He was very understanding and told me to be at peace. Only then did I remember that Jesus had always been by my side, taking every little step with me on my journey through life. I felt a brief moment of calmness knowing that He was with me to go through this together.

Winni also contracted the virus and was assigned to her own isolation room in front of mine. At first we couldn't communicate with each other. One day, at midnight, I noticed a glimmer of light in the room opposite me coming from the window of the door. I called Winni to stand near the door, and I saw a human profile. She started to sob and asked me, "Are we going to die? I don't want to lose you, I want to see my family again; it was all my fault, I shouldn't have proposed that trip." When I heard these words from my wife, it was as if a very heavy stone

was stuck in my throat and I felt my eyes flooding with tears. I told myself that I had to be strong while reassuring her: "Don't be silly, it's not your fault. It could have happened to anyone. I guarantee you that we will be fine since we are still young; we will soon see your family and the others."

Fortunately, a few days later we were put in the same room. That made a big difference because being able to support each other made the whole process more tolerable. One day in the morning, the words of the marriage vow came to my mind: "for better or for worse, in sickness and in health". I learned to appreciate and value my wife and our marriage much more.

## **Alone, Without My Wife**

After a few days Winni was discharged. This was a great joy, but I was faced with having to continue

the journey of my recovery alone. I ended up staying three more weeks by myself. Every day we would talk over the phone and she would tell me about her recovery, her difficulties in running the house on her own, and so on. I felt a little guilty and prayed to God to help me get cured as soon as possible.

I had moments that were very hard: I was very down and the situation was completely uphill. Thanks to God, little by little I channelled my anxiety and agitation towards Jesus, without demanding results. He gave me His peace and, in my prayers, I felt warmth and the presence of Christ in me, as I recalled a text from the Scriptures: "My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Cor 12:9). I felt that Jesus was trying to tell me to rest safely in His hands since everything is under His control. I learned that being a Christian does not mean being free from misfortune or the absence of

pain. The feeling of Jesus' presence gave me strength to endure the journey, alone, a little longer.

On the 47th day, a Sunday in May, I finally got the double negative in the laboratory tests and was discharged. The moment I left the hospital, I experienced a great sense of indescribable physical freedom. As soon as I got home, I hugged Winni for a long time. I promised myself to take more care of her, and also of our marriage, which was so blessed by God. We ate together enjoying every minute, and went for a walk in the city. I was surprised by the number of people on the streets and the loud traffic noise. It was a strong contrast to the tranquility and peace I had in that hospital room, being with Jesus. All the while, however, I realized I was still with Him.

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